

AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE

SEARCH REPORT

Applicant's or agent's file reference TTJ/ACL/K.2001166947		
Application No. SG 200108070-4	Application Filing Date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 27 December 2001	(Earliest) Priority Date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 28 December 2000
Applicant NIKON CORPORATION (JP)		

This search report consists of a total of 5 sheets.

☒ It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. ☐ Certain claims were found unsearchable (See Box I)

2. ☒ Unity of invention is lacking (See Box II)

3. ☐ The application contains disclosure of a nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing and the search was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing

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☐ filed with the application

☐ furnished by the applicant separately from the application,

☐ but not accompanied by a statement to the effect that it did not include matter going beyond the disclosure in application as filed

4. With regard to the title, ☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☐ the text has been established by this Office to read as follows:

5. With regard to the abstract, ☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant

☐ the text has been established by this Office as it appears in Box III

6. The figure of the drawings to be published with the abstract is Figure No. 1

☒ as suggested by the applicant.

☐ because the applicant failed to suggest a figure

☐ because this figure better characterises the invention

☐ None of the figures

AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE**SEARCH REPORT**

Application No.

SG 200108070-4**Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)**

This search report has not been established in respect of certain claims for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.

because they relate to non-patentable subject matter (sections 13 and 16) not required to be searched by this Office, namely:

2. ☐ Claims Nos.

because they relate to parts of the application that does not comply with the prescribed requirements (sections 25(4) and 25(5)) to such an extent that no meaningful search can be carried out, specifically:

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This Office found multiple inventions in this application, as follows:

The application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention because it does not relate to one invention or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept. In coming to this conclusion this Office has found that there are different inventions as follows:

1. Claims 1, 9 and 11 relate to a manufacturing method for manufacturing a product or an exposure apparatus. The method includes a plurality of manufacturing lines wherein sequences of the plurality of lines are time-shifted and a first module manufactured in one line is transferred to another line and installed to a main body of the product in another line. It is considered that this time-shifting arrangement above comprises a first special technical feature.
2. Claims 22 and 28 are directed towards an exposure apparatus which exposes or illuminates a second object by an exposure beam via a first object and projection system. The exposure apparatus defined is not limited to an exposure apparatus manufactured according to above claims 1, 9 and 11. Consequently these claims do not share special technical features with the earlier claimed invention.

Since the above mentioned groups of claims do not share any of the technical features identified, a "technical relationship" between the inventions does not exist. Accordingly the application does not relate to one invention or to a single inventive concept, a priori.

☒ Accordingly, this Office is reporting only on the main invention of claims 1 -21 , or

☐ Since little extra effort was involved, this Office is reporting on the inventions of claims .

AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE**SEARCH REPORT**

Application No.

SG 200108070-4

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

According to International Patent Classification (IPC)

Int. Cl. ⁷ G03F 7/20**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

DWPI, JAPIO with keywords: (lithog+ or semiconduct+ or plasma or LCD) and (manuf+ or produc+ or assembl+) and modul+ and (phase or shift or stagger or sequence or move or adjust or alter). Also searched (G03F 7/20 or H01L 21/) and exposure and (manuf+ or produc+ or assembl+)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
P, A	US 6 327 022 B (NISHI) 4 December 2001. See entire document	
P, A	US 6 262 796 B (LOOPSTRA et al) 17 July 2001. See entire document	
A	EP 951 054 A (NIKON CORPORATION) 20 October 1999. See entire document	

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C☒ See patent family annex

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of submission of the request to the Australian Patent Office

5 September 2003

Date of completion of the search report

14 November 2003

Date of mailing of the search report

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LARS KOCH

AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE**SEARCH REPORT****Application No.****SG 200108070-4****C (Continuation)****DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 6 027 262 A (AKIMOTO) 22 February 2000 See entire document	
A	US 5 907 392 A (MAKINOUCI) 25 May 1999 See entire document	
A	US 5 826 129 (HASEBE et al) 20 October 1998 See entire document	

AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE
SEARCH REPORT
PATENT FAMILY MEMBERS
Applicati n N .
SG 200108070-4

Patent Document Cited in Search Report				Patent Family Member			
US	6237022	AU	35243/00	EP	1177505	WO	0055748
US	6262796	EP	0890136	EP	0894287	EP	0900412
		EP	1197801	KR	2000010868	US	5815246
		US	5969441	WO	9828664	WO	9828665
		WO	9840791				
EP	0951054	AU	50678/98	CN	1322971	CN	1322972
		CN	1329286	CN	1329287	JP	10163097
		JP	10163098	JP	10163099	JP	10163100
		JP	10214783	KR	2000057310	SG	88823
		SG	88824	SG	93267	US	6341007
		US	6400441	US	6549269	US	6590634
		WO	9824115				
US	6027262	JP	10079343	SG	64442		
US	5907392	JP	9036204	JP	9082598	US	6188464
US	5826129	JP	8046010	JP	8078321	JP	2001203158
END OF ANNEX							